



SUPPORT FOR ARMING PARK RANGERS

February 13, 2019

VIA EMAIL ONLY

The Honorable David Ryu
Chair of the Health, Education,
Neighborhoods, Parks, Arts, & River Committee
Los Angeles City Hall, 200 N. Spring St. Room 425
Los Angeles, CA 90012
(213) 473 -7004

***RE: SUPPORT Armed While On Duty Park Rangers Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) Section 63.41
Amendment CF #20-0190***

I am contacting you to encourage advancement of this much needed policy and Los Angeles Municipal Code change. It has never been more important to ensure that as the first responders to any incident at any of the City of Los Angeles Parks; be granted the authority that comes with being a full-time law enforcement professional with this City. The changing of Section 63.41 (LAMC) will grant the tools necessary to provide the level of service and protection the park patrons, park and recreation staff and Park Rangers deserve. – Los Angeles Park Rangers who are sworn peace officers under 830.31 of the California Penal Code, are already trained, qualified and certified by our state's leading authority on law enforcement: the Commission on Peace Officers Standards and Training (POST).

The Department of Recreation and Parks maintains and operates more than 400 sites for recreational use. The Department is the most comprehensive social service agency in the City of Los Angeles, operating 184 recreation centers, 61 swimming pools, 11 lakes, 7 camps both in and out of town, more than a dozen museums and historic sites, 13 public golf courses, tennis courts, and hundreds of programs for youth, seniors, physically disabled persons, and volunteers. It also supervises construction of new facilities and improvements to existing ones.

With over over 450 parks and locations patrolled by the Los Angeles Park Rangers through out the vast 503 square miles, public safety at our parks and surrounding communities will be strengthened by this policy change. For the about 23,938 acres of parkland within its city limits, the surrounding communities will experience increased neighborhood safety as it frees up the Los Angeles Police Department resources to respond to local calls. Having received the same level of police academy training as LAPD, Los Angeles Park Rangers do not have the same protective tools as other Park Rangers agencies through out the United States that patrol such large citywide and rural areas.

This is non-fiscal, as tax dollars will not be required to provide new training since the Park Rangers are already currently receiving the State required training in the LAPD Academy. The Los Angeles Park Rangers primary responsibility is to ensure the highest level of safety and security for our parks. The change to 63.41 LAMC provides the additional authority necessary to do so. Park rangers should have the full ability to utilize all law enforcement tools and equipment to ensure the safety and security of the public under all circumstances.

This motion, CF #20-0190, introduced by Council Member Joe Buscaino, has been officially endorsed by Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) Chief Michael Moore, and the Peace Officers Research Association of California (PORAC).

I would ask you to move this motion forward for due consideration by the full Council. Are you available to meet and discuss?

Thank you for your time and attention to this important matter. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Los Angeles Airport Peace Officers Association



MARSHALL E. McCLAIN
President
(LAAPOA)

MM:md

cc: Hon. President Nury Martinez
Hon. President pro tem Joe Buscaino
Chief of Police Michael Moore
Chief Park Ranger Joe Losorelli

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MOTION

HEALTH, EDUCATION, NEIGHBORHOOD,
PARKS, ARTS & RIVER

The Department of Recreation and Parks (RAP) currently has 22 sworn City of Los Angeles park rangers assigned to its Park Ranger Division. The staffing levels are anticipated to expand to 50 rangers by mid 2020. Every day, park rangers patrol the City's parks day and night, often in remote and desolate areas of the City, and assist other City law enforcement agencies, including the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD). Approximately 70 percent of a ranger's daily duties are related to law enforcement activities and the first responder to an emergency in a City park is likely to be a park ranger.

Every sworn park ranger assigned to RAP's Park Ranger Division is required to complete a six-month Certified Academy Training Course, which includes, among other things, firearm training. The course is administered by California Police Officer Standard and Training (CAPOST), which regulates standards and training for all California law enforcement agencies throughout the state. CAPIST recognizes the City of Los Angeles Park Ranger Division and its sworn personnel as a law enforcement agency with full police powers to detain, arrest, book criminal violators, conduct investigations into criminal activity, and beyond. RAP park rangers are also considered full law enforcement officers under California Penal Code (CPC) section 830.1 and have full police powers throughout the State of California.

For the protection of the public and for the safety of all law enforcement officers in the City, it is necessary to amend LAMC section 63.41, to allow park rangers to be armed while on duty, as authorized by CPC §830.31(b) which states, " a person designated by a local agency as a park ranger, who is regularly employed and paid in that capacity, and whose primary duty is the protection of parks, may be armed by their employing agency."

Park rangers should have the full ability to utilize all law enforcement tools and equipment to ensure the safety and security of the public under all circumstances.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the City Attorney be DIRECTED to prepare and present an ordinance amending LAMC Section 63.41 to allow park rangers to be armed while on duty, in accordance with state law.

I FURTHER MOVE that the Department of Recreation and Parks be DIRECTED to report back on the department's plans for Use of Force policies; tactics and training; partnership, if any, with the Los Angeles Police Department on Categorical Uses of Force Investigations; counseling and psychological evaluations following a Categorical Use of Force incidents; and the budgetary impacts of the proposed program to arm park rangers.

I FURTHER MOVE that the Department of Recreation and Parks and the Los Angeles Police Department be DIRECTED to report back with policies and procedures for the implementation of the proposed program to arm park rangers.

PRESENTED BY: 

JOE BUSCAINO

Councilmember, 15th District

SECONDED BY: 


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